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Department of State

[Public Notice]

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Request
for Grant Proposals: Study of the U.S. Institutes for
Scholars and Secondary Educators

Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA/A/E/USS-13-06-09-OY-B

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 19.401

Key Dates: June to September, 2013

Application Deadline: November 26, 2012

Executive Summary: The Study of the U.S. Branch, Office of Academic Exchange Programs, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), invites proposal submissions for the design and implementation of four different Study of the U.S. Institutes to take place over the course of six weeks beginning in June 2013, pending the availability of funds. These Institutes should provide a multinational group of experienced foreign university educators, scholars, and other professionals with a deeper understanding of U.S. society, culture, values, and institutions.

Three of these Institutes will be for groups of 18 foreign university level faculty, focusing on the themes of Journalism and Media, U.S. Culture and Society, and U.S. Foreign Policy. The fourth Institute will be a general survey course on the United States for a group of 30 foreign secondary educators.

Applicants may propose to host only one Institute listed under this competition. Should an applicant propose to host more than one Institute, or submit multiple proposals under this competition, the applicant's proposal(s) will be declared technically ineligible and given no further consideration in the review process.

It is ECA's intent to award four Cooperative Agreements (one base year plus two option years) for an estimated total amount of \$3,690,000, pending availability of funds and successful performance. Please see section II.) Award Information below for additional details.

I. Funding Opportunity Description:

I. 1. Authority: Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Public Law 87-256, as amended, also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act. The purpose of the Act is "to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries...; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other nations...and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world." The funding authority for the program above is provided through legislation.

I. 2. Purpose: Study of the U.S. Institutes are intensive academic programs whose purpose is to provide foreign university faculty, secondary educators, and other scholars the opportunity to deepen their understanding of U.S. society, culture, and institutions. The ultimate goal is to strengthen curricula and to improve the quality of teaching about the United States in academic institutions abroad.

ECA is seeking detailed proposals for four different Study of the U.S. Institutes from U.S. colleges, universities, consortia of colleges and universities, and other not-for-profit academic organizations with established reputations in a field or discipline related to the specific program theme.

I. 3. Overview: Each program should be six weeks in length; participants should spend approximately four weeks at the host institution and approximately two weeks on an educational study tour, including several days in Washington, D.C., at the conclusion of the Institute. The educational travel component should directly complement the academic program and should include visits to cities and other sites of interest in the region around the recipient institution as well as to another geographic region of the country. The recipient will be expected to provide participants with guidance and resources for further research on the topics examined during the Institute after they return home as well as facilitate continued interaction between participants and U.S. academics.

I. 3. A. The Study of the U.S. Institute on Journalism and

Media should provide a multinational group of 18 experienced and highly-motivated foreign journalism instructors and other related specialists with a deeper understanding of the roles that journalism and the media play in U.S. society. The Institute should examine the rights and responsibilities of the media in a democratic society, including editorial independence, journalistic ethics, legal constraints, international journalism, and media business models. The Institute should include strategies for teaching students of journalism the basics of the tradecraft: researching, reporting, writing, and editing. The program should also highlight technology's impact on journalism such as the influence of the Internet, the globalization of the news media, the growth of satellite television and radio networks, and other changes that are transforming the profession. One award of up to \$290,000 will support this Institute.

I. 3. B. The Study of the U.S. Institute on U.S. Culture

and Society should provide a multinational group of 18 experienced and highly-motivated foreign university faculty and other specialists with a deeper understanding of U.S. society, culture, values, and institutions. The Institute should examine the ethnic, racial, social, economic,

political, and religious contexts in which various cultures have manifested themselves in U.S. society while focusing on the ways in which these cultures have influenced social movements and American identity throughout U.S. history. The program should draw from a diverse disciplinary base and should itself provide a model of how a foreign university might approach the study of U.S. culture and society. One award of up to \$290,000 will support this Institute.

I. 3. C. The Study of the U.S. Institute on U.S. Foreign

Policy should provide a multinational group of 18 experienced foreign university faculty and practitioners with a deeper understanding of how contemporary U.S. foreign policy is formulated and implemented. The Institute should include a historical review of significant events, individuals, and philosophies that have shaped U.S. foreign policy. The Institute should explain the role of key players in U.S. foreign policy including the executive and legislative branches of government, the media, the U.S. public, think-tanks, non-governmental organizations, and multilateral institutions. In order to ensure significant interaction with foreign policy practitioners, proposals are encouraged to maximize the length of the Washington,

D.C. program. One award of up to \$290,000 will support this Institute.

I. 3. D. The Study of the U.S. Institute for Secondary

Educators should provide a multinational group of 30 experienced secondary school teachers with a deeper understanding of U.S. society, education, and culture - past and present. The focus of the Institute should be on providing materials for participants to develop high school level curricula about the United States. To this end, the Institute may be organized around a central theme or themes in U.S. civilization. Through a combination of traditional, multi-disciplinary, and interdisciplinary approaches, program content should be imaginatively integrated in order to elucidate the history and evolution of U.S. institutions and values, broadly defined. The program should also serve to illuminate contemporary political, social, and economic debates in American society. One award of up to \$360,000 will support this Institute.

I. 4. Program Design: Each Study of the U.S. Institute should be designed as an intensive, academically rigorous seminar for an experienced group of educators from abroad.

Institutes should be organized through an integrated series of lectures, readings, seminar discussions, regional travel, and site visits, and should also include sessions that expose participants to U.S. pedagogical philosophy and practice for teaching the discipline. Each Institute should also include opportunities for limited but well-directed independent research.

I. 5. Participants: Participants will be diverse in age, professional position, and travel experience abroad. While participants may not have in-depth knowledge of the particular Institute program theme, they will likely have had exposure to the relevant discipline and some experience teaching about the United States.

Participants will represent all regions of the world and will be fluent or have advanced proficiency in the English language. Recipients will NOT participate in the selection of participants. U.S. Embassies, Consulates, and Fulbright Commissions will nominate candidates. ECA will make the final selections. Every effort will be made to select a balanced mix of male and female participants. A final list of participants will be sent to recipients prior to the start of the Institute. Recipients should provide

participants with pre-departure orientation materials at least six weeks prior to the start of the Institute.

I. 6. Program Dates: The anticipated award dates for these four Cooperative Agreements will be on or about March 1, 2013. The Institutes should be approximately 44 days in length (including participant arrival and departure days) and should begin between June and August 2013.

I. 7. Program Guidelines: The recipient is responsible for the conception and structure of the Institute and its agenda. Proposals must provide a detailed and comprehensive narrative describing the objectives of the Institute. Please see section 5 of the attached Program Objectives, Goals, and Implementation (POGI) document for application submission requirements. Overall, proposals will be reviewed on the basis of their responsiveness to the six criteria listed in this RFGP, as well as coherence, clarity, and attention to detail. **The accompanying POGI provides program-specific guidelines that all proposals must address fully.**

Please note: In a Cooperative Agreement, the Study of the U.S. Branch is substantially involved in program activities

above and beyond routine grant monitoring. The Branch may request that the recipient make modifications to the academic residency and/or educational travel components of the program. The recipient will be required to obtain approval of significant program changes in advance of their implementation. The Branch will also perform an annual performance evaluation/review. Satisfactory performance is a condition of continued administration of the program and execution of all option years.

Proposal narratives should include a brief commitment to implement the program for the base year, plus two additional option years, pending successful performance and availability of funds. The narrative should focus on details specific to the implementation of the base year program, with the understanding that the program design, duration, and participant numbers would be similar when/if the subsequent two option years are exercised.

II. Award Information:

Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement. ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under number I above.

Fiscal Year Funds: FY 2013; FY 2014 - option year-one; FY 2015 - option year-two, pending successful performance and availability of funds.

Approximate Total Funding: \$3,690,000. This figure represents the funding for all four Institutes for the base year plus two option years, pending successful performance and availability of funds. Of the four programs, three are Institutes for Scholars funded at up to \$290,000 per year and one is an Institute for Secondary Educators funded at up to \$360,000 per year.

Approximate Number of Awards: Four (4)

Anticipated Award Date: March 1, 2013.

Anticipated Project Completion Date: September 30, 2016.

This date reflects the anticipated duration of the award - one base year plus two option years.

Additional Information: Cooperative Agreements will be awarded for a period of 12 months with options for two additional periods. To ensure adequate time for post-Institute follow on activities, the final option period will be for eighteen months. ECA will notify the recipient of its intention to exercise or not to exercise an option year at least 90 days in advance of expiration of the current year after an internal evaluation of the recipient's performance. The decision to exercise option

years will depend both on the satisfactory performance of the recipient and the availability of funds.

III. Eligibility Information:

III. 1. Eligible applicants: Applications may be submitted by public and private not-for-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3).

III. 2. Cost Sharing or Matching Funds: There is no minimum or maximum percentage required for this competition. However, ECA encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of its programs.

When cost sharing is offered, it is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in its proposal and later included in an approved agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, recipients must maintain written records to support all costs which are claimed as recipient cost sharing, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance

with OMB Circular A-110, (Revised), Subpart C.23 - Cost Sharing and Matching. In the event recipients do not provide cost sharing as stipulated in the approved budget, ECA's contribution will be reduced in like proportion.

III. 3. Other Eligibility Requirements:

III. 3. A. ECA grant guidelines require that organizations with less than four years experience in conducting international exchanges be limited to \$130,000 in ECA funding. ECA anticipates making four awards, three in an amount up to \$290,000 per year, and one in an amount up to \$360,000 per year to support program and administrative costs required to implement this exchange program. Therefore, organizations with less than four years experience in conducting international exchanges are ineligible to apply under this competition. Proposals should clearly demonstrate compliance with this requirement.

III.3. B. Technical Eligibility: It is ECA's intent to award four separate cooperative agreements to four different institutions under this competition. Therefore prospective applicants may submit only one proposal to host one Institute under this competition. Should an applicant

submit multiple proposals under this competition, all proposals will be declared technically ineligible and given no further consideration in the review process. Please note: Applicant organizations are defined by their legal name and EIN number as stated on their completed SF-424 and additional supporting documentation.

Additionally, applications that do not meet the minimum requirements outlined below in section IV.3. will be deemed technically ineligible.

IV. Application and Submission Information:

Note: Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the RFGP deadline has passed, ECA staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

IV. 1. Contact Information to Request an Application

Package: Please contact Elizabeth Latham, Program Officer, The Study of the U.S. Branch, ECA/A/E/USS, Fourth Floor, U.S. Department of State, SA-5, 2200 C Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20522-0504, LathamEJ@State.gov, (202) 632-3338 to request a Solicitation Package. Please refer to

the Funding Opportunity Number ECA/A/E/USS-13-06-09-OY-B when making your request.

Alternatively, an electronic application package may be obtained from grants.gov. Please see section IV.3f for further information.

The Solicitation Package contains the Proposal Submission Instruction (PSI) document which consists of required application forms and standard guidelines for proposal preparation.

It also contains a sample budget in excel format and the Project Objectives, Goals, and Implementation (POGI) document, which provides specific information, award criteria, and budget instructions tailored to this competition. The sample budget is also available in PDF format. Please contact the program officer for the PDF version of the sample budget.

Please refer to the Funding Opportunity Number ECA/A/E/USS-13-06-09-OY-B located at the top of this announcement on all other inquiries and correspondence.

IV. 2. To Download a Solicitation Package Via Internet:

The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from ECA's website at

<http://exchanges.state.gov/grants/open2.html>, or from the Grants.gov website at <http://www.grants.gov>.

Please read all information before downloading.

IV. 3. Content and Form of Submission: Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The application should be submitted per the instructions under IV. 3. F. "Application Deadline and Methods of Submission" section below.

IV. 3. A. You are required to have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to apply for a grant or Cooperative Agreement from the U.S. Government. This number is a nine-digit identification number, which uniquely identifies business entities. Obtaining a DUNS number is easy and there is no charge. To obtain a DUNS number, access <http://www.dunandbradstreet.com> or call 1-866-705-5711. Please ensure that your DUNS number is included in the appropriate box of the SF - 424 which is part of the formal application package.

IV. 3. B. All proposals must contain an executive summary, proposal narrative, and budget.

Please refer to the PSI and the POGI in the Solicitation Package for additional information and technical requirements.

IV. 3. C. All federal award recipients must maintain current registrations in the System for Award Management (SAM) database. Recipients must maintain accurate and up-to-date information in www.SAM.gov until all program and financial activity and reporting have been completed. Recipients must review and update the information at least annually after the initial registration and more frequently if required information changes or another award is granted. Failure to register in SAM will render applicants ineligible to receive funding.

You must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of application. **Please note:** Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees,

regardless of amount of compensation.) In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

1) Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.

2) Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

In addition to final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one-page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

If your organization is a private nonprofit which has not received a grant or cooperative agreement from ECA in the past three years, or if your organization received nonprofit status from the IRS within the past four years, you must submit the necessary documentation to verify nonprofit status as directed in the PSI document. Failure to do so will cause your proposal to be declared technically ineligible.

IV. 3. D. Please take into consideration the following information when preparing your proposal narrative:

IV. 3. D. 1. ADHERENCE TO ALL REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE J VISA

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places emphases on the security and proper administration of the Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by award recipients and sponsors to all regulations governing the J visa. Therefore, proposals should demonstrate the applicant's capacity to meet all requirements governing the administration of the Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62, including provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of

participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

ECA will be responsible for acting as Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, and issuing DS-2019 forms to participants in this program.

A copy of the complete regulations governing the administration of Exchange Visitor (J) programs is available at <http://exchanges.state.gov> or from:

Office of Designation, Private Sector Programs Division
U.S. Department of State
ECA/EC/D/PS, SA-5, 5th Floor
2200 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20037

Please refer to the Solicitation Package for further information.

IV. 3. D. 2. Diversity, Freedom, and Democracy Guidelines:

Pursuant to ECA's authorizing legislation, programs must maintain a non-political character and should be balanced

and representative of the diversity of American political, social, and cultural life. "Diversity" should be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass differences including, but not limited to ethnicity, race, gender, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, and disabilities. Applicants are strongly encouraged to adhere to the advancement of this principle both in program administration and in program content. Please refer to the review criteria under the 'Support for Diversity' section for specific suggestions on incorporating diversity into your proposal. Public Law 104-319 provides that "in carrying out programs of educational and cultural exchange in countries whose people do not fully enjoy freedom and democracy," ECA "shall take appropriate steps to provide opportunities for participation in such programs to human rights and democracy leaders of such countries." Public Law 106 - 113 requires that the governments of the countries described above do not have inappropriate influence in the selection process. Proposals should reflect advancement of these goals in their program contents, to the full extent deemed feasible.

IV. 3. D. 3. Program Monitoring and Evaluation: Proposals must include a plan to monitor and evaluate the project's

success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. ECA recommends that your proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus a description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives. ECA expects that the recipient organization will track participants or partners and be able to respond to key evaluation questions, including satisfaction with the program, learning as a result of the program, changes in behavior as a result of the program, and effects of the program on institutions (institutions in which participants work or partner institutions). The evaluation plan should include indicators that measure gains in mutual understanding as well as substantive knowledge.

Successful monitoring and evaluation depend heavily on setting clear goals and outcomes at the outset of a program. Your evaluation plan should include a description of your project's objectives, your anticipated project outcomes, and how and when you intend to measure these outcomes (performance indicators). The more that outcomes are "smart" (specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and placed in a reasonable time frame), the easier it will be to conduct the evaluation. You should

also show how your project objectives link to the goals of the program described in this RFGP.

Your monitoring and evaluation plan should clearly distinguish between program outputs and outcomes. Outputs are products and services delivered, often stated as an amount. Output information is important to show the scope or size of project activities, but it cannot substitute for information about progress towards outcomes or the results achieved. Examples of outputs include the number of people trained or the number of seminars conducted. Outcomes, in contrast, represent specific results a project is intended to achieve and is usually measured as an extent of change. Findings on outputs and outcomes should both be reported, but the focus should be on outcomes.

We encourage you to assess the following four levels of outcomes, as they relate to the program goals set out in the RFGP (listed here in increasing order of importance):

1. **Participant satisfaction** with the program and exchange experience.
2. **Participant learning**, such as increased knowledge, aptitude, skills, and changed understanding and attitude. Learning includes

both substantive (subject-specific) learning and mutual understanding.

3. **Participant behavior**, concrete actions to apply knowledge in work or community; greater participation and responsibility in civic organizations; interpretation and explanation of experiences and new knowledge gained; continued contacts between participants, community members, and others.
4. **Institutional changes**, such as increased collaboration and partnerships, policy reforms, new programming, and organizational improvements.

Please note: Consideration should be given to the appropriate timing of data collection for each level of outcome. For example, satisfaction is usually captured as a short-term outcome, whereas behavior and institutional changes are normally considered longer-term outcomes.

Overall, the quality of your monitoring and evaluation plan will be judged on how well it 1) specifies intended outcomes; 2) gives clear descriptions of how each outcome will be measured; 3) identifies when particular outcomes will be measured; and 4) provides a clear description of

the data collection strategies for each outcome (i.e., surveys, interviews, or focus groups). Please note that evaluation plans that deal only with the first level of outcomes [satisfaction] will be deemed less competitive under the present evaluation criteria.

Recipient organizations will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to ECA in their regular program reports. All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to ECA upon request.

IV. 3. E. Please take the following information into consideration when preparing your budget:

Applicants must submit:

- **the SF-424A**, "Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs," which must include the budget request amount for the base-year of the program;
- **a detailed proposal narrative and budget for the base year of funding** (Please refer to the Proposal Submission Instruction Document (PSI) for general budget guidance and the POGI and Sample Budget for specifics. The narrative should also include a

brief commitment to implement the program for the base year, plus two additional option years, pending successful program performance and availability of funds.); and

- an abbreviated/estimated **summary budget presenting the total projected administrative and program costs for the anticipated total duration of programming** (base year, plus two option years). Budget requests for either of the three scholar Institutes may not exceed \$290,000 per year. Budget requests for the Institute for Secondary Educators may not exceed \$360,000 per year. There must be a summary budget as well as breakdowns reflecting both administrative and program budgets. Applicants may provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity to provide clarification.

Please refer to section VI. 2. of this document for information on allowable costs. Please refer to the Solicitation Package for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

IV. 3. F. Application Deadline and Methods of Submission:

Application Deadline Date: November 26, 2012

Reference Number: ECA/A/E/USS-13-06-09-OY-B

Methods of Submission:

Applications may only be submitted electronically through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>). Complete solicitation packages are available at Grants.gov in the "Find" portion of the system.

PLEASE NOTE: ECA bears no responsibility for applicant timeliness of submission or data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes for proposals submitted via Grants.gov.

Please follow the instructions available in the 'Get Started' portion of the site (<http://www.grants.gov/GetStarted>).

Several of the steps in the Grants.gov registration process could take several weeks. Therefore, applicants should check with appropriate staff within their organizations immediately after reviewing this RFGP to confirm or determine their registration status with Grants.gov.

Once registered, the amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors including the size of the application and the speed of your internet connection. In addition, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days.

Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.

The Grants.gov website includes extensive information on all phases/aspects of the Grants.gov process, including an extensive section on frequently asked questions, located under the "For Applicants" section of the website. ECA strongly recommends that all potential applicants review thoroughly the Grants.gov website, well in advance of submitting a proposal through the Grants.gov system.

Direct all questions regarding Grants.gov registration and submission to:

Grants.gov Customer Support

Contact Center Phone: 800-518-4726

Business Hours: Monday - Friday, 7AM - 9PM Eastern Time

Email: support@grants.gov

Applicants have until midnight (12:00 a.m.), Washington, D.C. time of the closing date to ensure that their entire application has been uploaded to the Grants.gov site. There are no exceptions to the above deadline. Applications uploaded to the site after midnight of the application deadline date will be automatically rejected by the grants.gov system and will be technically ineligible.

Please refer to the Grants.gov website, for definitions of various "application statuses" and the difference between a submission receipt and a submission validation.

Applicants will receive a validation e-mail from grants.gov upon the successful submission of an application. Again, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov. ECA will not notify you upon receipt of electronic applications.

It is the responsibility of all applicants submitting proposals via the Grants.gov web portal to ensure that

proposals have been received by Grants.gov in their entirety. ECA bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

IV. 3. G. Intergovernmental Review of Applications:

Executive Order 12372 does not apply to this program.

V. Application Review Information

V. 1. REVIEW PROCESS: ECA will review all proposals for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated in section III. 3. and section IV. 3. of this document and in the Solicitation Package. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the Public Diplomacy section overseas and State Department regional bureaus, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and ECA regulations and guidelines and forwarded to ECA grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural

Affairs. Final technical authority for cooperative agreements resides with ECA's Grants Officer.

V. 2. REVIEW CRITERIA: Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to the criteria stated below. These criteria are not rank ordered and all carry equal weight in the proposal evaluation:

- **Quality of Program Plan and Ability to Achieve Program**

Objectives: Proposals should exhibit originality and clearly demonstrate how the Institute will meet the objectives laid out in this solicitation. A detailed itinerary and staff work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity.

Activities should be reasonable, feasible, and form a coherent program for participant exploration of the topic. Competitive proposals will clearly promote ECA's mission: to foster mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries to promote friendly and peaceful relations.

- **Support for Diversity:** Proposals should demonstrate substantive support of the ECA's policy on diversity (please see the PSI for this policy). Achievable and relevant features should be cited in both program

administration (program venue and program evaluation) and program content (orientation and wrap-up sessions, program meetings, presenters, and resource materials).

- **Evaluation:** As explained in section IV.3d.3., proposals should include a plan to evaluate the Institute's success, both as activities unfold and at the end of the program. A draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus a description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives is strongly recommended.
- **Cost-effectiveness/Cost-sharing:** The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible, ideally under 33 percent of the ECA funding request. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. Proposals should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support, as well as institutional direct funding contributions.
- **Institutional Track Record/Ability:** Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange programs (past exchange programs need not have been ECA funded). ECA will consider the past performance of prior recipients including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all

reporting requirements for past ECA grants and cooperative agreements. ECA will consider the demonstrated potential of new applicants. Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be fully qualified to achieve the project's goals.

- **Follow-up and Follow-on Activities:** Proposals should discuss provisions made for follow-up with returned participants as a means of establishing longer-term individual and institutional linkages. Proposals also should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (with minimal ECA support) ensuring that ECA supported programs are not isolated events. Please refer to the POGI for additional information on follow-on activities.

VI. Award Administration Information:

VI. 1. Award Notices: Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated, and committed through internal ECA procedures. Successful applicants will receive a Federal Assistance Award (FAA) from the ECA's Grants Office. The FAA and the original proposal with subsequent modifications (if applicable) shall be the only binding authorizing document between the recipient and the U.S. Government. The FAA will be signed

by an authorized Grants Officer and mailed to the recipient's responsible officer identified in the application.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of the results of the application review from the ECA program office coordinating this competition.

VI. 2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements:

Terms and Conditions for the Administration of ECA agreements include the following:

Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-122, Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations.

OMB Circular A-21, Cost Principles for Educational Institutions.

OMB Circular A-87, Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Governments.

OMB Circular A-110 (Revised), Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of

Higher Education, Hospitals, and other Nonprofit Organizations.

OMB Circular A-102, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants-in-Aid to State and Local Governments.

OMB Circular A-133, Audits of States, Local Government, and Non-profit Organizations.

Please reference the following websites for additional information:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants>

<http://fa.statebuy.state.gov>

VI. 3. Reporting Requirements:

For the purposes of these grants, ECA anticipates that the following reporting periods will apply:

Quarter One: March 1-May 31

Quarter Two: June 1-August 31

Quarter Three: September 1-November 30

Quarter Four: December 1-February 28

Please Note: All quarterly reports shall be due 30 days after the reporting period.

Recipients must provide ECA with an electronic copy of the following reports:

- *Quarterly financial reports.* The Federal Financial Report (FFR SF-425/SF-425a) must be submitted through the Payment Management System (PMS). The electronic version of the FFR can be accessed at: <http://www.dpm.psc.gov/> . Failure to comply with these reporting requirements may jeopardize the Recipient's eligibility for future Agreements.
- *Quarterly program reports.* A SF-PPR, "Performance Progress Report" Cover Sheet must be submitted with all program performance reports. The performance reports (PPR) must be submitted electronically to the Grants Office at reportseca@state.gov with a copy sent to the Program Officer. Please note: dates for submission of reports are not the dates on the instructions of the SF-PPR. Recipients should ALWAYS refer to the final assistance award document.
- *Final financial and program reports.* The reports must be submitted no more than 90 days after the expiration or termination of the award.
- *A concise, one-page final program report* summarizing program outcomes no more than 90 days after the

expiration of the award. This one-page report will be transmitted to OMB, and be made available to the public via OMB's USAspending.gov website - as part of ECA's Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reporting requirements.

The program and financial reports must demonstrate substantial progress by addressing progress towards the original approved goals and objectives, relative activities and events, and supporting fiscal data. The reports will be reviewed by both the assigned Grant Officer and Program Officer.

Award recipients will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. (Please refer to IV. Application and Submission Instructions (IV.3.d.3) above for Program Monitoring and Evaluation information.

All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

To exercise the option year mechanism the recipient will be required to submit:

- Timely performance and financial reports;
- A written request for ECA to consider exercising the option year at least 90 days in advance of the expiration of the current program year. This request should include a brief narrative to support the continuation of the award and be incorporated into or highlighted in the third quarterly program report;
- A summary budget that projects program expenses through the end of the current year; and
- A detailed budget outlining both administrative and program expenses for the requested option year.

Before exercising additional option years, the ECA Grants Officer and Program Officer will:

- Closely monitor the recipient's performance through site visits, desk audits, consultations, and other forms of communication and dialogue before exercising additional option years.
- Review and evaluate all mandatory reports.

Please Note:

- All program and financial reporting must be current and up-to-date before ECA will exercise additional option years.
- Any/all concerns, issues, or modifications requested by the Grants Officer or Program Officer to the original program design or method of implementation must be responded to in writing.
- The ECA Grants Officer and Program Officer will review and advise of ECA's approval or disapproval of the response before issuing subsequent option years.

VII. Agency Contacts: For questions about this announcement contact: Elizabeth Latham, U.S. Department of State, Study of the U.S. Branch, ECA/A/E/USS, SA-5, Fourth Floor, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20522-0504, (202) 632-3338, LathamEJ@state.gov.

All correspondence with ECA concerning this RFGP should reference solicitation number ECA/A/E/USS-13-06-09-OY-B.

Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals.

Once the RFGP deadline has passed, ECA staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

VIII. Other Information:

Notice:

The terms and conditions published in this RFGP are binding and may not be modified by any ECA representative.

Explanatory information provided by ECA that contradicts published language will not be binding. Issuance of the RFGP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government. ECA reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements per section VI.3 above.

Ann Stock

October 22, 2012

Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs
Department of State